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BOOK REVIEWS

PREVENTION OF VENEREAL DISEASE. Third Edition. By Marie Carmichael Stopes, D.Sc. 62 pages. Putnam & Co. Ltd. London. 1939. Price 2s. 6d.

IN a preface to the recently published third edition of her book "Prevention of Venereal Diseases," following on the first and second editions entitled "The Truth about Venereal Disease," Dr. Marie Stopes lays great emphasis upon the end results of syphilis and gonorrhœa, and sets out to impress these facts upon the general public, for whom the book is intended.

In the opening chapters is given a clear account of the manner in which these diseases are contracted. Dr. Stopes rightly claims that the control of these has been hampered by the fact that public opinion in this country has always regarded venereal disease as unmentionable. Then follows a fairly accurate description of the gross manifestations of cerebrospinal and congenital syphilis. The fact that these characteristics have been described in exceptionally highly coloured language with the object of giving a picture of the more distressing symptoms, is in keeping with the expressed object of the book. With regard to the remarks about gonorrhœa, the reader will not be so appreciative, and will question at least two facts in the following statement: "It mercifully sterilises women after the first child, so they are spared the horror of bringing to birth foully abnormal children."

In short, the methods by which Dr. Stopes sets out to achieve her object are, firstly by giving terrifying examples of the effects of these diseases, secondly, by stressing that infectious contact is immoral under any conditions, and thirdly—a more controversial point—the advocacy of the use of disinfectants immediately after exposure to infection.

Suggestions for the use of calomel ointment are ideal but somewhat impractical, and on the other hand, advice for "washing, scouring, and disinfecting" the parts is dangerous. The suggestion that potassium permanganate should be carried habitually as a prophylactic would seem to encourage the impulse for casual intercourse.

This book is, on the whole, an earnest attempt to make the people of this country more conscious of the existence of venereal disease, but fails to emphasise that these diseases are curable, and would plant utter despair in those who are already infected.

M. B.

METHODS OF REHABILITATION OF ADULT PROSTITUTES. *League of Nations Publications*, 1939, IV. 4. 157 pages. Geo. Allen & Unwin Ltd. Price 3s. 6d.

Experience shows that the problem of prostitution tends to acquire particular importance in time of war, not only for the countries directly